

## Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 CU-02 SCA-01 JUSE-00 SEC-01 /066 W

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P 012310Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1608

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAN JOSE 4165

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, CS

SUBJECT: VESCO, EXTRADITION LAW, AND ATTACKS ON U.S.

REF: (A) SAN JOSE 4082

(B) SAN JOSE 4075

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: TWO DAYS OF ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON COSTA RICA'S 1974 EXTRADITION LAW PLUS THE ATTACKS OF TWO PLN/FIGUERES NEWSPAPERS ON THE U.S. EMBASSY FOR "INTROMISSION" IN THIS MATTER HAVE SUCCEEDED IN PUTTING VESCO BACK IN THE NEWS IN COSTA RICA. ANTI-GOVERNMENT MEDIA HAVE RENEWED ATTACKS ON BOTH VESCO AND THE "VESCO LAW." MINORITY ATTEMPTS TO REPEAL VESCO LAW WILL PROBABLY FAIL. END SUMMARY.

2. DESPITE PRESIDENT ODUBER'S CLEAR DENIAL THAT AMBASSADOR TODMAN WAS EXERTING ANY PRESSURE IN THE VESCO EXTRADITION CASE (REFTEL A), EXCELSIOR AND LA HORA, BOTH PLN/FIGUERES-BACKED PAPERS, HAVE CONTINUED TO SUGGEST U.S. INTERVENTION IN COSTA RICAN  
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AFFAIRS, USING SLANTED HEADLINES (EXCELSIOR), SNIDE

EDITORIALS (LA HORA), AND FULL-PAGE PAID REPRODUCTIONS (IN BOTH PAPERS) OF ONE PARTICULARLY NASTY TELEVISION EDITORIAL. AT THE SAME TIME, THE OPPOSITION MEDIA, THROUGH EDITORIALS, NORMAL COVERAGE OF ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES ON ATTEMPTS TO REPEAL EXTRADITION LAW, INTERVIEWS WITH POLITICAL PERSONALITIES, AND CARTOONS, HAVE CONCENTRATED ON VESCO AND ON THE EXTRADITION LAW.

3. IN AN OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO NEUTRALIZE ACTING-PRESIDENT GUZMAN'S STATEMENTS AGAINST VESCO'S PRESENCE IN COSTA RICA (REFTEL A, PARA 2), EXCELSIOR FINALLY MANAGED TO ELICIT AN ANTI-INTERVENTION STATEMENT FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT; HE WAS ASKED IF HE WOULD ACCEPT U.S. PRESSURE TO GET VESCO OUT OF COSTA RICA. HIS RESPONSE GAVE EXCELSIOR A NEW HEADLINE ON SEPTEMBER 29: "I WILL ACCEPT NO FOREIGN INTERVENTION," AND GUZMAN WAS QUOTED: "THE NATION CANNOT PERMIT ITS LAWS TO BE REFORMED BY FOREIGN INSERTIONS; THEREFORE, I MUST REJECT THE POSITION OF AMBASSADOR TODMAN." CONSIDERING THE CHARACTER OF VICE-PRESIDENT GUZMAN, HIS WELL-KNOWN ANTI-VESCO POSITION, AND THE AX EXCELSIOR IS GRINDING, IT IS CLEAR THAT HIS STATEMENTS WERE PURPOSELY PROVOKED TO PRODUCE AN "ANTI-U.S. EMBASSY" STATEMENT. LA HORA PICKED UP THE SAME PIECE AND, ALTHOUGH LA HORA ALSO PUBLISHED PRESIDENT ODUBER'S DENIAL, ITS EDITORIAL COMMENTS CONTINUE TO REFER TO "TODMAN'S PRESSURES."

4. ON SEPTEMBER 30, BOTH NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED FULL-PAGE, PAID REPRODUCTIONS OF A TELEVISION EDITORIAL ENTITLED, "WE DO NOT ACCEPT TODMAN'S 'INTERVENTIONISM.'" (THE EDITORIAL HAD BEEN PRESENTED ON A CHANNEL 7 NEWS SHOW WITH A VERY LOW VIEWER RATING THE DAY BEFORE.) THE FULL-PAGE AD, THE NASTIEST SO FAR IN THIS LATEST "CAMPAIGN," ACCUSES AMBASSADOR TODMAN OF "SPEAKING IN CONTRADICTIONS" AND "SLAPPING (AT) COSTA RICA'S SOVEREIGNTY." AGAIN REFERRING TO SOME UNIDENTIFIED NEW LEGISLATION ON EXTRADITION IN THE U.S. CONGRESS (REFTEL), THE AD SAYS, "STOP, MR. TODMAN, YOUR TITLE DOES NOT GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO ATTACK OUR SOVEREIGNTY

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AND TRANSPLANT AMERICAN LAWS TO OUR ASSEMBLY." IT GOES ON TO WARN, "TAKE YOUR HANDS OUT OF OUR LEGISLATIVE PROCESS, MR. TODMAN; WE WILL NOT TOLERATE AN 'INTERVENTIONIST' POLICY OF YOUR GOVERNMENT. IF MR. VESCO LEAVES, HE WILL LEAVE UNDER OUR LAWS, NEVER WITH LAWS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH, INSERTED BY YANKEE INTERVENTIONISM, INSPIRED BY THE POLITICAL EMOTIONS OF THE HIERARCHS OF YOUR COUNTRY." AND, FINALLY,

"THIS INTERVENTIONIST ATTEMPT BY AMBASSADOR TODMAN  
MAKES HIM AN UNDESIRABLE DIPLOMAT EVEN IN THE EYES OF  
VESCO'S WORST ENEMIES IN COSTA RICA."

5. NEITHER THE SUBSTANCE NOR THE TONE OF THE  
EXCELSIOR/LA HORA CAMPAIGN HAVE BEEN PICKED UP BY THE  
OTHER MEDIA. OPPOSITION PAPERS AND RADIO NEWS STATIONS  
HAVE CONCENTRATED ON ACTING PRESIDENT GUZMAN'S INITIAL  
ANTI-VESCO STATEMENT, THE NEED TO REFORM THE 1974  
EXTRADITION LAW, AND GETTING VESCO OUT OF COSTA RICA.  
LA NACION, LA REPUBLICA, AND THE KEY RADIO STATIONS  
HAVE AVOIDED EDITORIAL REFERENCE TO U.S. EMBASSY.

6. TWO BILLS TO REFORM THE 1974 EXTRADITION LAW ARE  
SCHEDULED TO BE DEBATED IN THE ASSEMBLY OVER THE NEXT  
TWO WEEKS. THE MINORITY-BACKED BILL CALLS FOR A RETURN  
TO THE 1971 EXTRADITION LAW; THE MAJORITY BILL IS TO  
REFORM THE 1974 "VESCO" LAW. THE ATTEMPT BY THE MINORITY  
(MIGUEL ANGEL QUESADA NINO AND JULIO MOLINA SILVERO) TO  
BRING THEIR BILL TO DEBATE ON A PRIORITY BASIS WAS  
THWARTED BY PARLIAMENTARY MANEUVERING ON SEPTEMBER 29  
AND DECISIVELY DEFEATED IN A VOTE ON SEPTEMBER 30  
(38 VOTES ARE NEEDED; ONLY 1 PLN DEPUTY OF 28, 3 UN  
PAQUISTAS OF 11, AND THE PNI AND THE PRD BLOCKS SUPPORTED  
THE MOTION). THE DEPUTIES CONCENTRATED THEIR REMARKS ON  
THE LAW AND VESCO'S PRESENCE; THE EMBASSY OR THE  
AMBASSADOR WERE MENTIONED ONLY IN PASSING. THE  
OPPOSITION HAS PROMISED TO KEEP UP THE CAMPAIGN.

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MRN: 1975SAN JO004165 SEGMENT NUMBER: 000002 ERROR READING TEXT INDEX  
FILE; TELEGRAM TEXT FOR THIS SEGMENT IS UNAVAILABLE

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Draft Date:** 01 OCT 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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